

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information providing system, comprising:  
a client that obtains user information and  
sends the information to a server; and  
said server that manages the user information  
sent from said client for each user and, based on the  
user information, selects information to be sent to  
said client.
2. The information providing system according to  
claim 1,  
wherein said client performs a pseudo  
conversation with a user to obtain a user's taste as  
the user information.
3. The information providing system according to  
claim 1,  
wherein the information sent from said server  
to said client includes advertisements.
4. The information providing system according to  
claim 1,  
wherein said client records information on  
user's operation as the user information.
5. An information providing method in a network  
system, comprising the steps of:  
preparing a plurality of agents each having  
its own function;  
supplying one of the agents to a client in  
response to a user request;  
collecting, by said agent, user information

FOOTNOTES

and sending the user information to a server;

selecting information, based on the user information, from information stored in said server ;

and

sending the selected information to said agent.

6. The information providing method according to claim 5,

wherein said server accumulates the received user information and uses the same user information for said plurality of agents each having its own function.

7. The information providing method according to claim 5,

wherein said agent performs a pseudo conversation with a user to collect a user's taste as the user information.

8. The information providing method according to claim 5,

wherein said server sends an instruction to said client based on the user information and

wherein said agent changes operation according to the instruction.

9. A coupon distribution method in a network system, comprising the steps of:

preparing coupons in a form of digital data;  
registering said coupons and a total number of coupons to be issued with a server;

sending said coupons from said server to a

client over a network; and

managing, by said server, the client to which the coupons are sent and a number of sent coupons.

10. The coupon distribution method according to claim 9,

wherein the coupons each include program code that displays a bar code on a display screen of the client in response to an instruction of a user.

11. The coupon distribution method according to claim 9,

wherein the coupons each include program code that outputs a signal from the client to an external unit in response to an instruction of a user.

12. An agent program that runs on a client in a network system, said program including code that causes a computer to execute the steps of:

displaying a human being as an animation;  
performing a pseudo conversation with a user;  
changing operation in response to an answer from the user;

memorizing the user's answer and sending the answer to a server; and

displaying information sent from said server.

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